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RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY 0592
RUEHLI/AMEMBASSY LISBON PRIORITY 0512
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 0360
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 0373
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON PRIORITY 0451
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY 0245
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 DILI 000304

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TAGS: PGOV MOPS ASEC PHUM UN KPKO CASC PO MY TT AS
SUBJECT: EAST TIMOR SITREP FOR JUNE 12, 2006

REF: A) DILI 296 B) DILI 300

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CLASSIFIED BY: Grover Joseph Rees, Ambassador, U.S. Embassy
Dili, Department of State.
REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

¶1. (U) Summary:

GOET Calls on UN to Establish Independent Special Inquiry Commission;
Opposition MP Joins Major Reinado to Call for Changes to the Constitution;
GNR Cooperates Effectively with JTF;
Security environment.
End summary.

GOET Calls on UN to Establish Independent Special Inquiry Position

¶2. (SBU) In a rare appearance before Parliament today, Foreign/Defense Minister Ramos-Horta announced the GOET's request that the United Nations establish an independent Special Inquiry Commission to review specific violent incidents and other related events that contributed to the present crisis. The Minister explicitly mentioned the events of April 28-29 and May 23-25 as the major topics for the investigation. When questioned about an investigation into allegations that Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri armed pro-Frettilin groups, Ramos-Horta stated the commission could include an investigation into this accusation. Sources reported, however, that the Prime Minister is hoping the UN will limit the scope of the investigation to relations between the police and military. Surprisingly, despite the presence of many opposition MPs, very few questions were asked of the Minister regarding the proposed investigation and recent events.

¶3. (C) On Sunday, Australian television aired a press conference in which the Australian Justice Minister announced that the Australian Federal Police (AFP) forensics team that is currently investigating violent clashes that occurred between the military (F-FDTL), police (PNTL), and dissident forces does not plan to investigate allegations that Prime Minister Alkatiri established and armed secret Fretolin hit squads to eliminate key opposition leaders and members of the group of petitioners. (Note: "Petitioners" refers to the approximately 595 former F-FDTL members dismissed in March.) EmbOff spoke today with officers at the Australian Embassy, who confirmed that no such investigation would take place. The Australian Embassy sources said the ADF would not investigate the allegations against Alkatiri both because the forensics team is currently occupied with other investigations and because the GOA feared it would give the impression that it was supporting anti-Alkatiri factions.

Opposition MP Joins Major Reinado to Call for Changes to the Constitution

¶4. (SBU) Yesterday, dissident leader Major Alfredo Reinado was joined by opposition MP Manuel Tilman, the leader of a small opposition party called KOTA (Association of Timorese Warriors), at a press conference held in the mountain town of Maubisse. During the press conference, Tilman said he was calling for a "gathering of intellectuals" to discuss the current crisis and propose policy changes to the GOET. (Note: Although several "intellectuals" did indeed travel to Maubisse today to meet with Tilman, many others refused to do so out of fear of appearing aligned with Reinado's group.) Tilman offered the first proposal, which included changes to the Constitution that would grant the President more extensive powers. He also called for the dissolution of the current Parliament, the installation of a caretaker government, and new national elections to be held

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within six months. The Timorese constitution includes language that prohibits amending the constitution for six years from the date it was adopted, but Tilman claims this can be overcome if the President declares a state of emergency, effectively suspending the Constitution. While it is extremely unlikely that any of Tilman's requests will even receive a response from the GOET, it is noteworthy that Reinado has aligned himself with an intelligent and generally well-respected (if somewhat idiosyncratic) opposition MP.

¶5. (C) During a meeting with the President's Chief of Staff, Agio Pereira, EmbOff was informed that President Gusmao met with dissident leaders Majors Tara and Tilman last weekend at his home in Balibar. Pereira stated that both men had agreed to a broader dialogue that would include Reinado's group and the petitioners. It is still unclear whether the groups would accept the direct participation of Prime Minister Alkatiri or if he would be represented by Foreign/Defense Minister Horta. Pereira also indicated that the President would meet with Major Reinado and Lieutenant Gastao Salsinha (spokesman for the petitioners) separately next weekend. While any possible dialogue would still aim to promote reconciliation, Pereira indicated that the President believes it is crucial that these groups also face an appropriate judicial process. He also stated that he believes it is highly likely that the group of demonstrators recently organized by Major Tilman (See Ref A) will conduct larger anti-Alkatiri demonstrations within the next few days, possibly in coordination with groups from the East. The Chief of Staff concluded by stating that the President will address Parliament this Wednesday to discuss the dialogue process and his proposed next steps.

GNR Cooperates Effectively with JTF

¶6. (C) During a meeting with EmbOff today, Portuguese special

police (GNR) Commander Carvalho and GNR Liaison Officer Soares confirmed the close GNR-Joint Task Force coordination previously reported by the JTF Police Commander and dismissed allegations of strained relations, stating that these reports were exaggerated by the press. (See Ref B). Although the GNR remains outside the JTF command structure, the GNR Liaison Officer said he has established an effective working relationship with the JTF Command Center and remains in constant contact regarding incidents in the sector controlled by GNR. He also explained that there are daily coordination meetings between the GOET, JTF, and GNR. While Ramos-Horta was initially the GNR's key contact within the GOET, Soares stated that Interior Minister Baris has now largely assumed this role. GNR Commander Carvalho stated that in addition to the 130 officers on the ground, the GNR Headquarters in Lisbon was dispatching a four person investigative team to provide forensics support within GNR's sector. He indicated that the presence of this team would in no way impede any investigation currently underway by the Australian police (AFP) forensics teams. One operational difference between the GNR and JTF forces is that the GNR does not conduct foot patrols, nor do they have any permanent security posts in their zone. Carvalho concluded the meeting by showing EmbOff a map of the GNR's sector and explaining that the U.S. Embassy falls within this area. He provided EmbOff with his direct number and stated that GNR stands ready to respond to any security problems at the U.S. Embassy.

Security environment

¶7. (SBU) Over the past three nights the now common reports of scattered house burnings and gunshots (the latter mostly at night) continued. Since Friday the city has gradually become more active, with a few more grocery stores and other commercial establishments re-opening their doors. This morning a cargo vessel docked at Dili's port, the first commercial vessel to unload in Dili for several days. Crowded conditions at the internally displaced persons (IDP) camps continued. Yesterday marked the first violent act to take place in an IDP camp, when

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a man outside the camp shot a woman insider the camp with an arrow. The man reportedly perched on a ladder outside the camp and waited for this particular woman to walk by. American citizens and other internationals, mostly NGO workers, are slowly trickling back into Dili to help with relief efforts for the IDPs.

REES